

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 7-17 are pending in this application.

Rejection of Claims 1-4, 5, 7-17 under 35 USC § 103(a)

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-8, and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abecassis (U.S. Patent No. 5,684,918) in view of Wugofski (U.S. Patent No. 6,704,028 B2).

The present claimed invention recites a method and apparatus for selectively controlling access to programs. In order to control access, a rating limit corresponding to a first user input and an exception to the rating limit corresponding to a second user input are set. Information for identifying a program and for specifying a rating of said program is received and compared with the stored rating limit. It is then determined whether an exception to the rating limit has been set for the program identified by the received program identifying information. Access to the program is controlled in response to the results of the steps of comparing and determining. The exceptions from said rating limits define programs which shall be blocked or enabled independently to the set rating limits.

Abecassis discloses a video on demand system. In this system, a user is able to selectively view a video. The viewing of this video is subject to preset content preferences for the user. However, as admitted by the Examiner, Abecassis neither discloses nor suggests that “exceptions from said rating limits define programs which shall be blocked or enabled independently to said set rating limits” as in the present claimed invention.

Wugofski discloses a convergence system suitable for accepting inputs from several television or personal computing sources and output the sources on a display. The convergence system is controlled by a multi-function controller suitable for providing a set of function commands. Contrary to the assertion of the Examiner,

Wugofski, similarly to Abecassis, neither discloses nor suggests that “exceptions from said rating limits define programs which shall be blocked or enabled independently to said set rating limits” as in the present claimed invention. In Wugofski’s convergence system, there is no need to provide exemptions from the rating limits as programs provided for viewing are specifically selected by the user prior to viewing. The Examiner contends that Abecassis in view of Wugofski discloses the above discussed exemptions from the rating limits in Wugofski’s Fig. 6 and column 6, lines 43-65. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Figure 6 of Wugofski illustrates an on-screen rating control menu that permits a user to control the channels and events accessed by a selected viewer. The rating control threshold allows the user to select the limits in terms of “rating” assigned to programs, in terms of the program content, or both. Additionally, the user may limit the access of the viewer to specific times during the day in the scheduled access field. Wugofski neither discloses nor suggests that “exceptions from said rating limits define programs which shall be blocked or enabled independently to said set rating limits” as in the present claimed invention. Wugofski’s invention is concerned with setting ratings limits, not setting “exceptions from said rating limits define programs which shall be blocked or enabled independently to said set rating limits” to block or enable viewing of a program as in the present claimed invention.

In view of the above remarks to the claims, it is respectfully submitted that Abecassis and Wugofski, when taken alone or in combination, provide no 35 USC § 112 compliant enabling disclosure showing the above discussed features. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Abecassis and Wugofski, when taken alone or in combination, do not make the present invention as claimed in Claims 1, 16 and 17 unpatentable. As Claims 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 15 are dependant on Claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also allowable for the same reasons discussed above. It is thus respectfully submitted that these rejections are satisfied and should be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims 4 and 16 under 35 USC § 103(a)

Claims 4 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abecassis (U.S. Patent No. 5,684,918) in view of Wugofski as in claim 1 and further view of Aras et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,872,588).

Aras discloses a method and apparatus for content coding of audio/visual materials. The content coding can be decoded by a home station where the content coding is collected and processed. However, Aras, similarly to Abecassis and Wugofski, neither discloses nor suggests that “exceptions from said rating limits define programs which shall be blocked or enabled independently to said set rating limits” as in the present claimed invention.

In view of the above remarks to the claim, it is respectfully submitted that Abecassis when taken alone or in any combination with Wugofski and Aras provides no 35 USC § 112 compliant enabling disclosure showing the above discussed features. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that any combination of Abecassis, Wugofski and Aras does not make the present invention as claimed in Claims 1 and 16 upatentable. As Claim 4 is dependant on Claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 4 is also allowable for the same reasons discussed above. It is thus respectfully submitted that these rejections are satisfied and should be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 under 35 USC § 103(a)

Claims 9-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abecassis (U.S. Patent No. 5,684,918) in view of Wugofski as in claim 1 and further view of Wood et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0054752 A1).

Wood discloses a video data recordable having integrated channel guides allowing a user to control recording and storage of television signals into personal channels for later playback and viewing. However, Wood, similarly to Abecassis and Wugofski, neither discloses nor suggests that “exceptions from said rating limits define

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programs which shall be blocked or enabled independently to said set rating limits” as
in the present claimed invention.

In view of the above remarks to the claim, it is respectfully submitted that any combination of Abecassis, when taken alone or in any combination with Wugofski and Wood, provides no 35 USC § 112 compliant enabling disclosure showing the above discussed features. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that any combination of Abecassis, Wugofski and Wood does not make the present invention as claimed in Claim 1 unpatentable. As Claims 9-14 are dependant on Claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also allowable for the same reasons discussed above. It is thus respectfully submitted that these rejections are satisfied and should be withdrawn.

Having fully addressed the Examiner's rejections, it is believed that, in view of the preceding amendments and remarks, this application stands in condition for allowance. Accordingly then, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited. If, however, the Examiner is of the opinion that such action cannot be taken, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicant's attorney at the phone number below, so that a mutually convenient date and time for a telephonic interview may be scheduled.

No fee is believed due. However, if a fee is due, please charge the additional fee to Deposit Account 50-2828.

Respectfully submitted,
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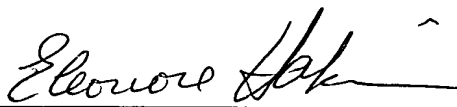
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I hereby certify that this amendment is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on

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